



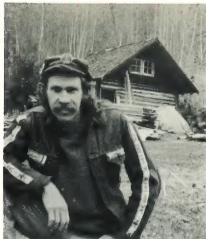
BEYOND TIME^{and} AGAIN

by Geo Metzger

BEYOND TIME^{and} AGAIN • METZGER •

Kyle & Wheary

710-



Beyond Time and Again

is the story of an Earth of the far future, an Earth living in the half-light of a dying sun, the past in shadow, her knowledge and arts lost and discovered a thousand times over, an Earth whose peoples while away their days, some with dreams and revelries, some seeking the arts of the past to escape the future — and it is the story of Seth of Comstock who seeks his *own* destiny across time and space . . .

From the valley of the ritual of Birth and Death, to the great high mountains of madness where the lady Panchandara is linked forever to him, to the nightmare underground world of the weremen, to the City of Magicians where Lolcraft the wizard struggles against the fall of eternal night, to the final bastion of humanity on Earth — Seth roams a world immeasurably changed but still unforgettably our own.

Once “lost” in the pages of now-vanished underground weeklies George Metzger’s almost legendary graphic novel is the greatest tale of adventure, science, fantasy and the imagination ever created for the graphic story.

KW

In addition to *BEYOND TIME AND AGAIN*, George Metzger is the creator of many short graphic stories, as well as two series of underground comic books, *Moondog* and *Trucking*, which reflect his interest in the American West and his own life in the rural-hippie culture.

Born in July 1939 in Southwestern Illinois, he spent his formative years in Northern California small-town life. He began drawing at an early age, and was strongly influenced by science fiction stories and comic strips. After college in San Jose, where he studied print-making, alternating with periods in the forestry service and the U.S. Army, he became a commercial silk screen printer. During this time he returned to comics and science fiction, and became one of the most influential creators among the underground artists who emerged in the '60s and early '70s.

A book of George Metzger's graphic stories has been published in Germany. He now lives and works in Canada. This is his first graphic novel.

BEYOND TIME and AGAIN

by GEORGE METZGER



BEYOND TIME and AGAIN

a graphic novel by **GEORGE METZGER**

KYLE & WHEARY · Huntington Beach · 1976

Kyle & Wheary
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Portions of this book have appeared in the
underground press publications *Mobius Strip*, San Jose *Red Eye*,
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To
Jack Vance,
Bethany deMoss,
Bill Craddock



...Earth with her peoples whiling away their days,
some with dreams and revelry, some seeking
the Arts of the Past, to escape the future...

I am a Seventh
Son, as was my late father
before me... with these few
ancient Spells and runes — and
his luck — he won his Castle, his
place in the world... is this the
heritage he left me? he must
have understood the restlessness
in my mind....

These are the
adventures of
Seth of Comstock,
cast out of his
father's castle, to
wander in the
multi strange world
opened to him in
his search for
Knowledge...

...the Rune of
Everchange, the
incantation of
the Slow
Hour...

...how many of the
Ancients' spells are left
in the world today?
who knows them?

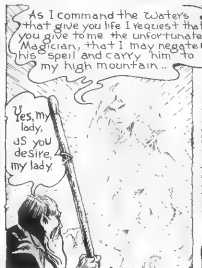
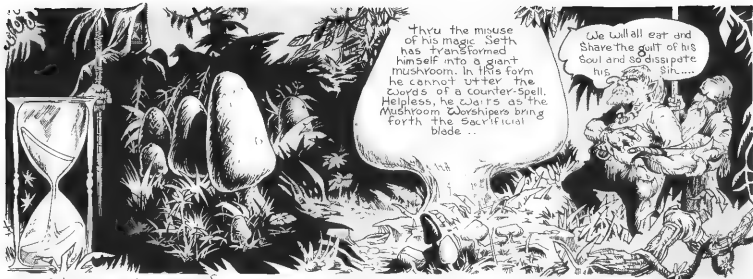
I
will
inquire...

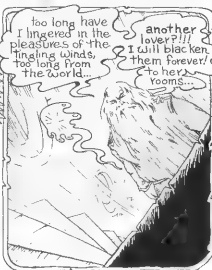
...and Seth set off across the Great Blight towards the
Mountains of Chrystal Madness, beyond which the
lands of the Magicians were said to exist...













GONE!
blasted
into nothingness!!



not so—
look in the
closed fist
of your left
hand...

—She is there, deep in the
dimension of that Jewel,
yours forever to keep and
cherish, yours to converse
with, to hold close to the
warmth of your
body...



but now for you—
begone to those
unhappy lands
you so rashly
seek, never
to return,
GO!



a rich reward for the
evils they have done
you,
my lord...

BEGONE! You, spirit,
are the evil, forcing me
to acknowledge my flaws,
to punish others for
theirs, thus
abandoning
my love
begone



Meanwhile

What? where
am I?



in one
of the lands
beyond the
Chrystal
Mountains..

the Sorcerers.

Yes, but be our
luck good or poor?
in whose lands do
we travel?







The Weremen of Dynaless!!



Their numbers are too great and Seth is beaten down..



And the city of the nameless one lies underground, whispers Panchandaya.



Boo! KUH! HERE MASTER..

Shhhhhhh a good Subject to the laboratory; we will begin conversion as Science wills..



Seth has been taken captive by a practitioner of the lost art Science & wizardry so shunned by others that he is nameless to all who know and avoid him.

Now in an underground laboratory...

In your pack I found these veins of Magic - you seek to know of spells whose patterns seduce you further from reality?



I shall give you the immortality of science - I will augment your body with machine strength and senses perfecting cybernetics - then you will be the equal of any here - oiled perfection!

you say NO? But the flawless body enforced by machinery: it is best for you!!

Says who? it's my body can't I say?

Science and the Law of True Things say so! you must adhere to True Things, and thru their application discover the pattern of the Universe...

I see only patterns of mindlessness and servility here, that yoad and no other...

let him talk believe I have enough power to awaken one of the spells in your bag...

With tingling suddenly
all motion comes to
an abrupt halt....



Save for Seth....

the Spell of
the Slow Hour
for one hour
they'll seem
suspended
in time.



and grabbing his gear he
needs for the surface...

outlast...
What?



Fat!
QUICKLY!! THAT WAY
to safety to the
city of SORERY...
QUICKLY—I REMEMBER
THE OLD DAYS
I REMEMBER...

I WAS ONE OF HIS
FIRST AND SO NOT
SO PERFECT—I KEPT
MY AMULET TO WARD
OFF SPELLS—I REMEMBER
THE OLD DAYS...



ALAS, I AM TOO
OLD OR I TOO
ZOULD GO...
~ Sigh ~ BUT
I CANNOT ESCAPE
THE PATTERNS
OF MY LIFE Wh...click!

but Seth is not to escape
so easily, for when the
hour is gone

He dares to
flaunt his magic
here! He has
insulted my
generosity.



He CANNOT, must
not, escape me!

My tireless, science-powered
men will systematically hunt
him down across the whole
of this dying planet even
tho it take forever
and always...



Ahead Seth approaches his first
city, gleaming in the night
with eerie
power...





A Tavern in the City of Nag'gal

Over the long
years the Barrier
of Distortion has
kept the Mad One's
machine abominations
away.... but now...
so close....

does he now dare
grow bolder? is he so
sure of his power
that he challenges the
Barrier's spell? perhaps
he can..... ?

let them come!
I for one have no fear.
We all reckon ourselves
to be magicians of
some prowess -
our combined power
would give him a
great battle...

What say you,
stranger? would
you disdain
to test your powers
against the evil
without?

I do not seek it,
but if it comes I will
meet it with all powers..
...and I am gladdened
to hear you all
speak of facing it...

...for **I** am the
one the Weremen
Seek....

brave indeed
are the men
of this fabled
city...

but we are not native
to it are we?

...no... i am quite
newly arrived..
..... Speak on...

I am Shale of the North Country—I have come to this City as a student to study the Arts, but few practitioners will risk losing valuable secrets by accepting an apprentice. Currently I am designing to probe for the spells of the City's most noted necromancer: Lolcroft the Unseen, Master Protector of the city...

I am here similarly. I am Seth of Comstock, a Seventh Son, with a few spells and runes, and come seeking to know more of the wise arts of ages gone... and how is it with your 'luck'?

only my 'luck' has kept me alive so far—now I am looking to that 'luck' to put me further from the Weremen. What of this 'bavvier' that keeps them out?

WHAT of it?

a spell of time Distortion envelopes us all, we live oblique of that time the rest of the world exists in! Did you not have to work a spell to pass within the city walls?

spell? no, I but walked in

Can my fortune be true? Have I found the one that I seek? Does this man have some latent ability to move thru time?

Seth, I wish to propose a scheme—to enlist your aid in my plan, a venture that might also further you from the paths of the Weremen.

...to rob the library of Lolcroft the Unseen!

...and your designs are



I haven't journeyed so long and so hard to learn such feats of legerdemain as you suggest — No, in that I won't join you.

as you wish, but perhaps I can still aid your quest.

aid!

Do you wish to escape your pursuers?

Panchandars.

but Sudden! Seth is alerted by a call at his boat!

Seth! Beware! He is not what he seems! I detect an aura of ILLUSION about him!!

A spirit encased in a jewel around his neck?...and it gives him further sight? He MUST be the one foretold of! But how am I to secure him for my Great Need?

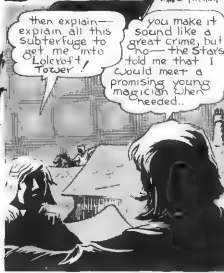
Real? in THIS city what meaning does that—

wait!

REE! oh Lolcroft protect us! the Weremen are in the city!!

HOLD SHAW!

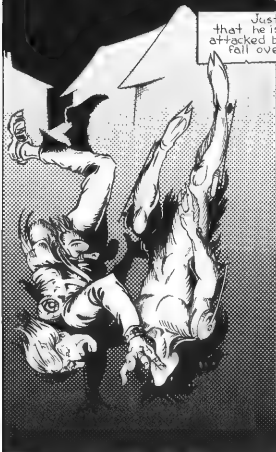
ARE YOU REAL?





BEYOND TIME AND AGAIN

Just as Shalu reveals that he is Lolcroft, Seth is attacked by a werewoman. Both fall over into darkness...



Entering thru a trap door Shalu/Lolcroft slips down a flight of stairs to the street level...







A blood-red Sun looks down on a cold and lonely Earth, looks down on muffled figures hurrying across a snow desert towards solitary Arlok Keep, with an unconscious Form...

...that of Seth of Comstock...



You have found something important?

Yes!- quickly, take me to one of the High Ones!



I am about to link up with my sisters in a mass-mind, but if it is truly vital I will see her at once.



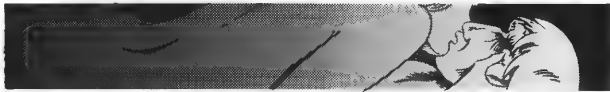
excuse me, your Highness, but the evolutionary priestesses must know....

...Just this morning, beyond the Black Sea, we found....

a MAN!









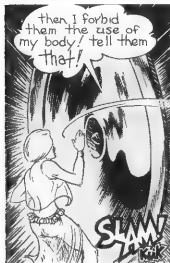
but it was all in vain....

we reproduced no males, only females, a result of the longevity Serum; and the High Ones, once feminine, were sterile, virtually neuter... and when the last male died it appeared that we had reached a dead end.....

...but we studied on, hoping... and the mountains eroded away as the Sun grew more unsteady... and then you came—a man, untainted. now we have the hope of sons!

but how did it happen? I have moved this time as Shaly said I could, but....

Why yes, the High Ones have all the things you brought with you, but you are forbidden to leave this area and.....







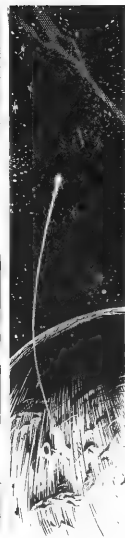
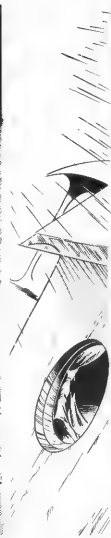
And the time passes as Seth, with a monomaniacal zeal pursues his task

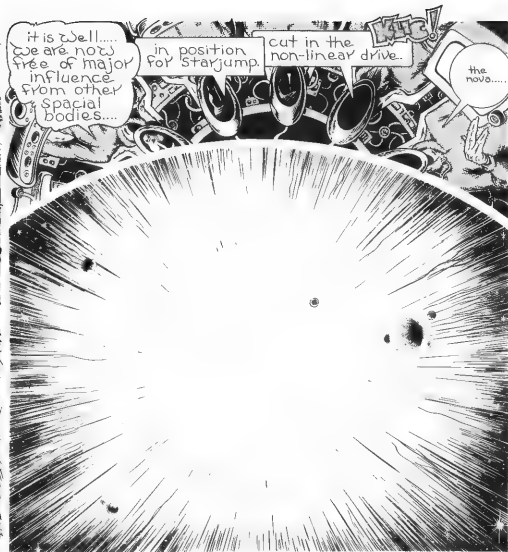


And the World changes.... the snows melt, the waters slip away to the Sun leaving the earth cracked and ugly... and other than the Keep there is not a living thing..









The life-carrying pod Arlon Keep vanishes into safety and continuity...



While behind...
NOVA! the unsteady
mother star
detonates!



her energy bursts forth



the sunward face of
the Earth melts



and then her too.





but where is he??



...adrift in time



...slipping across the dimension
sidereally, cutting back thru
time...



Seth's submerged psychic ability is at
work—his unconscious body has been dropped
out of the forward time continuum...

...drawn on by the power of his talent...dropping back into the
past sequences of the Continuum...



but guided to where?

in the City that has No Name the City Protectorate Magician, Lolcroft (in his corporeal form called Shalu), looks down upon a dead, shattered Wereman....

the Fall finished him as it should have Seth.... but he's vanished!!

did he know some trick of

Seth ALIVE!

different clothes.... how? time!

Yes, secretive one... he can and has traveled time's unceasing waves...





When first i met you,
Seth, i sensed in you
some latent power—a
"talent" newly absorbing.
Somewhere within
you you perceive

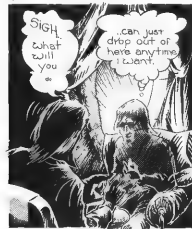
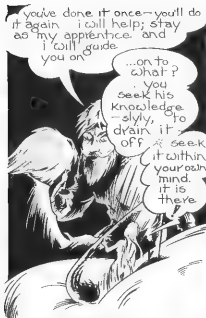
past the categorized bound-
aries given to time + matter
you perceive it as a whole.
All that ever was is or will
be... Time is a plane you
move upon at
will



you can drop into existence where ever
you wish or feel called....can you effect
change? or ? i wish more than guess-
i want to know.
what has been
revealed to
you?

i do not know - nor
yet understand—
but where i went i
was needed.... i
fulfilled a purpose..
and i do not recall that
i wished to go there





the lamp of knowledge
casts no shadow.



KW